

WELLESLEY HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION  
CALLED MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING  
JULY 26, 2016, 6:45 PM  
GREAT HALL, WELLESLEY TOWN HALL

Members Present: Lisa Abeles, Eric Cohen, Edwina McCarthy, and Emily Maitin  
Members Absent: Barry Friedman and David Smith,  
Staff: Heather Lamplough and Michael Zehner  
Also Present: Gilbert Dailey, 126 Woodlawn Avenue

**Lisa Abeles called the meeting to order at 6:52pm.**

**Certificate of Appropriateness: 126 Woodlawn Avenue HDC 16-03:**

*Discussion:*

The applicant, Gilbert Dailey presented the proposed project to the Commission. Mr. Dailey explained that before beginning this house renovation, that he and his wife did talk extensively with the grandson of the former owner of the house, who provided them with a lot of the history of the house. Mr. Dailey stated that the grandson, Nathan Gunner did drive by the house the other day and texted Ms. Dailey stating that the project looks like it is coming along well. Mr. Dailey stated that he and his wife love this house, and are trying to do their best to do right by the house. Mr. Dailey referred to a letter from Judy Gunner, who expressed concerns about replacing the windows, with windows that do not match the existing. He stated that he did attempt to reach out to her and explain that they are planning on matching the existing windows with the same divided lights. He stated that they plan on doing 16-over-16 windows on the first floor and 12-over-12 windows on the second floor, because that is what exists today. He stated that the current windows are not the original windows, and they are currently covered by storm windows with a metal bar right across the window. He stated that they believe that the storm windows detract from the look of the house, and that the storm windows are not historic. Mr. Dailey explained that their Pella representative did attempt to get a hold of a 16-over-16 and 12-over-12 window for this meeting, so that the Commission could look at them from the distance of 107' (which is the distance from the front door of the house to the road).

Mr. Dailey presented some historic photographs of the house, that show that the original windows on the house weren't even divided light windows. The house was constructed in 1826. One of the photographs presented was from c.1920s and 1937. Mr. Dailey reminded the Commission that the house has also been completed moved and turned to face another direction, since its original construction. Mr. Dailey explained that the house was designated as a Local Historic District because of the Fiske Family, and stated that the 16-over-16 windows did not even exist on the house during the time in which the Fiske Family lived in the house. Mr. Dailey referred to the letter from Ms. Gunner, of which stated that the current windows were installed in 1937.

Ms. McCarthy asked the applicant if he plans on replacing the entire window. Ms. Abeles said that is the issue she has with the project. Mr. Dailey presented a photograph of an historic house (built in 1928) located just around the corner from his property, at 22 Valley Road, of which just had the exact Pella replacement windows that they are proposing installed. Mr. Dailey explained that they would like to just use replacement windows because they do not want to have to remove all of the interior trim. Ms. Abeles stated that she has never been in favor of replacement windows. Mr. Dailey read aloud a letter from his Pella representative which stated that has used these Pella windows in countless historic properties, that

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have been approved by most of the surrounding communities. He stated that the beauty of the existing window is hidden behind the non-historic storms.

Ms. Abeles stated that Pella does have a window in this line, that is an entirely new window. She stated that she would never be okay with replacement windows. Mr. Zehner asked Ms. Abeles what the appearance difference is between the two. Ms. Abeles stated that the replacement window ends up being a frame within a frame, that ends up being shimmed in to fit. Mr. Dailey stated that his Pella representative stated that you end up losing more glass behind a storm window that you do if you were to install a replacement window. Mr. Dailey stated that the house at 22 Valley Road (presented in the photograph) is about 40 feet from the street. He stated that his house is 107 feet from the street. Ms. Abeles stated that it is hard to discern from the photograph. Mr. Dailey reminded the Commission that they were basing their opinions last week off of photographs. Ms. Abeles stated that what she means is that it is hard to tell from a distance. Mr. Dailey stated that that is exactly his point. He stated that his house is set 107 feet back from the street, and you are not going to be able to tell the difference from that distance.

Ms. Abeles asked the applicant why he wants to replace the windows. Mr. Dailey explained that the multitude of professionals that he is working with this project have all stated that this is a better solution. Ms. Abeles stated that the window salesperson is going to say anything to get you to buy windows. Mr. Dailey stated that the salesperson they are working with is extremely professional and has been in the field for over 20 years, and that he doesn't think it is fair to say that about him. Mr. Dailey stated that he doesn't take spending more money lightly, but this is the decision that they have made, of which they think is best for everyone. He stated that he doesn't really want to be here fighting for the more expensive solution, but that he feels like he is fighting for the right solution. Ms. Abeles stated that she understands what he is saying, but she just doesn't understand why he wants to replace these windows, that appear to be in great condition, and that with the storm windows, he has a good window in terms of energy efficiency. Mr. Dailey stated that he believes it will be a better looking window, that it will be significantly more energy efficient, that it is more attractive and that it will be less maintenance than the existing windows.

Planning Director Michael Zehner explained to the Commission that the bylaw states that the Commission is charged with determining if an alteration is appropriate and compatible in the historic district. Mr. Zehner further read from the bylaw and explained that while the Commission may be interested in why the applicant is proposing to remove the windows, they are only charged with determining if the proposal is an appropriate alteration to the historic structure. He explained that if the Commission determines that the application is not appropriate and denies the application, they must explain the reasons as to why they are denying the application (which should be tied back to the guidelines). Mr. Zehner explained the options to the Commission on how they can move forward: issue a Certificate of Appropriateness, issue a Denial, or issue recommendations that would be acceptable to the Commission. Ms. Abeles told the applicant that she would be willing to accept to have the entire window replaced, not just a frame within a frame replacement window.

Mr. Cohen stated that it doesn't matter what something looks like from the street; he stated that as an extreme example someone could paint their house white and then draw lines across and say well from the street it looks like clapboard.

Ms. Maitin asked the applicant if he had any drawings that show what the replacement sash will look like and what an entirely new window would look like. Mr. Dailey said that no, they have not had the architect

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draw that. Ms. Maitin stated that while she understands that the photo presented shows the Pella replacement windows, she would like to see what it will look like on this house specifically. Mr. Dailey stated that he doesn't think that storm windows, that block the windows are attractive. Ms. Abeles stated that she thinks that the applicant makes a good point that the storm windows do impede the look of the house and the existing windows, because you have this large single piece of glass over it, it is detracting from the windows themselves. Ms. Abeles stated that she believes that a replacement window, with a frame within a frame is worse than the storm windows. Ms. Abeles stated that while she would be sad to have the windows removed, she would be willing to approve an entirely new window. Ms. McCarthy agreed.

Miss Lamplough asked if it would be possible to get samples of these to bring in for the Commission to see in person. Mr. Dailey stated that he thinks that this has gone on too long as it is, and he doesn't want to drag it along any further. Mr. Cohen stated that the applicant could always install interior storm windows if he didn't want the exterior storm windows.

The Commission and the applicant discussed which windows are under their purview. The Commission discussed the replacement of the window on the right side of the garage. Mr. Cohen stated that he doesn't understand why it needs to be replaced because you don't need energy efficiency in a garage. Mr. Dailey stated that it was because they wanted consistency throughout the entire house. Ms. Abeles stated that she thinks it would be okay to replace this window because the windows on the left wing (new addition) will be new anyways, and this would sort of balance that.

There were no comments from the public at the public hearing.

*Ms. McCarthy made a motion to approve entirely new (frame and sash) Pella Architectural Series, wood interior, aluminum clad exterior windows. Ms. Maitin amended the motion to include that the windows must appear exactly the same, or as identical as possible, as the existing windows (an existing 16-over-16 sash window must be replaced with a 16-over-16 sash window). Ms. Abeles seconded the motion. The motion passed 3-0. Commissioner Eric Cohen was opposed.*

*Mr. Cohen made a motion to replace the window located on the right side of the garage with an entirely new (frame and sash) Pella Architectural Series, wood interior, aluminum clad exterior window, independent of the replacement of all of the existing windows on the main block of the house. Ms. Abeles seconded the motion. The motion did not carry. Commissioners Eric Cohen and Emily Maitin were opposed.*

*Ms. Abeles made a motion to replace the window located on the right side of the garage with an entirely new (frame and sash) Pella Architectural Series, wood interior, aluminum clad exterior window, only if the applicant is also replacing all of the existing windows on the main block of the house. Ms. McCarthy seconded the motion. The motion passed 4-0.*

The Commission explained that if the applicant decides to leave the existing windows, he is able to do that without any sort of approval or certification from the Commission.

The Commission discussed whether the windows behind the screened porch are visible. Miss Lamplough stated that those windows are located behind the screen and are therefore not visible

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from a public way, so they are not under the Commission's purview. She explained that if he were to remove that screen on the porch and make anything behind it visible, he would need to receive approval from the Commission.

Mr. Dailey stated that they are proposing to add a dormer to the side of the house. He stated that this is a change from the original approved plans, but it will not be visible from a public way. He stated that even though it is on the side of the house, it is behind the main block of the house, so it will not be visible. Ms. Abeles stated that they should just be careful when they are framing it out, and be sure that it cannot be seen from the street.

The next Historic District Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 7, 2016.

**Minutes:**

*Documents:*

1. *Minutes from 05/24/2016 HDC Meeting*
2. *Minutes from 07/19/2016 HDC Meeting*

These meeting minutes will be voted on at the next meeting on September 7, 2016.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm.**

*Note: A recording of this meeting is available from the Planning Department.*

Minutes Approved: 09/07/2016

Respectfully submitted by:  
Heather Lamplough  
Senior Planner